



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
NORTHEAST REGION  
One Blackburn Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

DEC -6 2005

Dear Federal and/or State Commercial Fishing Permit Holder:

You are receiving this letter and enclosures for the purpose of complying with the requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (Act). By virtue of holding a current/valid state or federal permit for a fishery that falls under one or more of the Category I/II fisheries listed on the reverse of the enclosed Certificate, you have been registered automatically in NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP). Only those Category I/II commercial fishery participants registered under the MMAP are exempted from the Act's general prohibition on the taking of non-endangered/threatened marine mammals incidental to their fishing operations.<sup>1</sup> No takes of endangered or threatened marine mammals are authorized in the Atlantic.

If you plan to participate in one or more of the Category I/II fisheries identified on the reverse side of the enclosed Certificate, **you must:**

- Maintain the enclosed MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a copy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the Certificate. In the case of non-vessel fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a copy, must be in the possession of the person in charge of the operation. This Certificate, in combination with a current/valid state or federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered/threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the enclosed Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (or visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- Take an observer aboard your vessel if so requested.

With this letter we would also like to provide you with contact information on the current and upcoming marine mammal take reduction plans as described on the reverse.

Please review the Terms and Conditions listed on the enclosed Authorization Certificate. This Certificate may be suspended or revoked by NMFS for failure to comply with any of these Terms and Conditions. If you have any questions regarding MMAP registration or general questions about the MMAP and/or List of Fisheries, please contact Marcia Hobbs at (978) 281-9300, ext. 6505. For additional information, you can visit the NOAA Fisheries Service MMAP web page at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/mmap/>.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Colligan  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Protected Resources

Enclosures

<sup>1</sup> Due to the way in which the list for this mailing was generated, it is possible that recreational (i.e., non-commercial) state license holders will receive this letter. If you are a recreational fisherman, please disregard this letter, as the above MMAP requirements currently do not apply to recreational operations.



## **MMAP Registration Requirements**

- In the Northeast Region, NMFS automatically registers those fishermen who hold current state or federal permits. However, those fishermen who engage in a fishery for which no state or federal fishing permit is required must register in the MMAP via U.S. Mail using the appropriate forms obtained from NMFS. This form, as well as further information, can be obtained by contacting the NMFS Northeast Region Protected Resources Division at (978) 281-9300 ext. 6505.
- Fishermen participating in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the MMAP by January 1, 2006.

## **Other Requirements**

- **Observers.** Fishermen participating in Category I or II fisheries must accommodate observers upon request from NMFS.
- **Submitting Reports.** All vessel owners participating in Category I, II, or III fisheries must report all incidental injuries or mortalities of marine mammals that occur during commercial fishing operations within 48 hours of returning from the trip in which the injury/mortality occurred.
- **Take Reduction Plans and Emergency Regulations.** Fishermen participating in Category I or II fisheries must comply with applicable Take Reduction Plans and emergency regulations.

## **Take Reduction Plans for Atlantic Fisheries**

### **Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP)**

The ALWTRP regulations are intended to reduce the risk of serious injury and mortality of large whales in commercial fishing gear, including American lobster trap/pot and gillnet gear. An upcoming modification to the ALWTRP is expected to publish in early 2006. Amongst other measures, NMFS is considering regulating other trap/pot fisheries including, but not limited to, those targeting conch/whelk, hagfish, red crab, scup, black sea bass, tautog, and Jonah crab.

For further information about the current ALWTRP, as well as the upcoming modification to the ALWTRP, contact the ALWTRP Coordinator, Diane Borggaard, at 978-281-9300, ext. 6503 or visit the ALWTRP web page at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/whaletrp>. If you have questions about specific gear modifications, please contact the industry liaison for your area: John Higgins (207-677-2316) in New England or Glenn Salvador (302-644-2375) in the Mid-Atlantic.

### **Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan (HPTRP)**

The take reduction plan for the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy harbor porpoise stock remains in effect for waters off Maine through and including North Carolina. For further information, contact the Northeast Region Protected Resources Division at (978) 281-9300, ext. 6505 or visit the HPTRP web page at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/porptrp/>. You can also contact the industry liaison for your area (above under ALWTRP) with specific questions about gear requirements.

### **Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Plan (BDTRP)**

NMFS convened a take reduction team to address the bycatch of North Atlantic coastal bottlenose dolphins throughout their range in nine East Coast fisheries. For further information, contact the Southeast Region Protected Resources Division at (727) 824-5312 or visit the BDTRP web page at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt/bdtrp.htm>.

### **Atlantic Trawl Gear Take Reduction Plan (ATGTRP)**

In September 2006, NMFS will convene a take reduction team whose goal will be to develop consensus recommendations for a take reduction plan to reduce the serious injury and mortality of pilot whales, common dolphins, and Atlantic white-sided dolphins from interactions with trawl fisheries. For further information, contact the Northeast Region Protected Resources Division at (978) 281-9300, ext. 6505 or visit the ATGTRP web page at [http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot\\_res/atgrtp](http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot_res/atgrtp).